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The Post's lament for a dead traitor

Donald Maclean was a British diplomat who, between 1944 and 1949, served in Washington. Americans trusted him so highly that he knew their innermost military and diplomatic secrets. When he returned to Washington in 1950 as head of the American desk of the British foreign office, he became privy to the fact that President Truman absolutely forbade his military commanders in Korea to cross into Communist China.

He betrayed American intentions to the Soviets. This enabled Chinese troops to intervene, confident that Truman would permit no retaliation against mainland China, nor use atomic weapons.

Maclean betrayed every American atomic secret, starting with the super-secret Manhattan Project that led to the first atomic bomb. He kept Stalin fully informed on the state of mind in the Washington of 1945-46. This permitted the Soviets to seize half of Europe, secure in the knowledge that the West was afraid to offend the Russians.

He gave Moscow the details of Western reaction to the discovery

of Soviet atomic-spy rings, because he was present when a confused Canadian prime minister rushed in to tell Truman of the disclosures of a Soviet defector, Igor Gouzenko. Maclean helped the Russian intelligence services to stay one step ahead of each counter-intelligence move, while the Anglo-British-Canadian alliance tried to clean up the spy networks Gouzenko exposed.

This thoroughly nasty traitor has now had an obituary of sorts published in *The Washington Post*, written from Moscow by that oddity among Russian "historians," Roy Medvedev, a friend of Maclean.

Nothing in *The Post* report suggests that Maclean was less than a hero defending Soviet interests. Maclean died earlier this year, within days of the death of another traitor, ex-Sir Anthony Blunt. The obituaries that appeared in the Western press for both these scoundrels contrast oddly with the brief mention accorded Igor Gouzenko, whose own death preceded theirs by a few months.

The most anyone found to say about Gouzenko was that he had been a cipher clerk who defected from the Soviet embassy in Ottawa in 1945. *The Times of London* mentioned that King George VI had granted him British citizenship. Otherwise, Gouzenko was pretty much ignored.

It was the same kind of dismissal

that frustrated his efforts to convince the West that Russian moles occupied high positions in our security and diplomatic services.

Gouzenko was the victim of a skillful KGB campaign to kill his reputation. False information was inserted into Canadian security files on his case. A KGB "sleeper," activated to kill Gouzenko, gave himself up instead. It made little difference, because Gouzenko had been effectively slandered to the point where nobody listened to him.

Maclean was one of the many Russian agents Gouzenko tried to have investigated. But Maclean attended the Anglo-American intelligence conferences to study Gouzenko's charges. With Kim Philby and some other, as yet unidentified Russian mole, he kept control over the pursuit of Gouzenko's leads, and made sure they led nowhere.

The Washington Post lament for a dead traitor is only one example of the KGB campaign to present to the West a portrait of "respectable spies" who serve Moscow, and of "treacherous defectors" who desert Moscow.

Long after Anthony Blunt was unmasked, the media displayed its willingness to go along with Moscow by continuing to treat Blunt as somehow exempt from harsh judgment. His academic reviews continued to appear, for instance, in the *Times of London*.

Blunt, before he died, became a source of newspaper exposes of minor ex-spies. These were British and American communist sympathizers who, during the Hitler era, passed secrets to the Soviet Union. The purpose in feeding them into the furnace of spy scandals rocking the West in the past two years was to make them seem, in a curious way, respectable and understandably committed.

The Maclean obituary from Moscow, in all of the three thousand words published by *The Post*, mentions only one betrayal. And it comes out sounding almost noble. Maclean got hold of Truman's order not to cross the China border from Korea, and not to use the atomic bomb. On that basis, Mao Tse-tung intervened and saved North Korea from defeat.

Otherwise, Maclean emerges as a scholar, scientist, political analyst, "prominent member of the Institute of World Economics and International Relations" (which is, of course, Soviet-sponsored); and finally, in the Stalinist era, "adviser to the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs," presumably while he was drawing the pay and enjoying the privileges of a British diplomat.

His patriotism in World War II was such that he sought and obtained exemption from war ser-

vice in Britain, but naturally this also is not deemed worthy of mention.

If Maclean is not to be clothed in respectability, British intelligence will have to change the classification on his case, now marked "Top Secret" until the start of the 21st century.